

WOMEN'S SERVICE
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NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

THE
Catholic Citizen

Organ of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance (formerly Catholic Women's Suffrage Society), 55 Berners Street, London, W. 1.

Vol. XIII, No. 4.

15th APRIL, 1927.

Price Twopence.

Daughter of the ancient Eve,
We know the gifts ye gave and give;
Who knows the gifts which you shall give,
Daughter of the Newer Eve?

—Francis Thompson.

The Catholic Case against Artificial Conception Control.

By A PRIEST.

The Church's teaching regarding the artificial control of conception is perfectly clear and definite. All theologians condemn it as grave sin. A decree of the Holy Office dated March 21, 1851, declares that it is prohibited by natural law, and another of April 19, 1853, speaks of it as intrinsically evil. That is good enough for Catholics. Still, it may be asked: Why does the Church condemn it? Economic pressure is so great, individual circumstances are sometimes so hard, the remedy is so boldly preached and so impudently practised, that Catholics may be forgiven for wanting to know why they may not take advantage of this promise of unembarrassed love of marriage. One half of the primeval curse remains: "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children"; but the preceding words are, according to the Birth Controller, to be gainsaid: "I will multiply thy conceptions."

There is an antinomy in the sphere of sex. The powerful urge of the instinct is necessary to secure the preservation of the race, and yet the promiscuous exercise of the instinct would injure the race. An instinct so universal is natural, and its exercise must be for the good of the individual, and yet its indiscriminate and unrestrained exercise would be disastrous to the individual. The use of the sex faculty tends to the blessing of children, but children are not an unmixed blessing. This antinomy is resolved by the Sacrament of Matrimony, which presides over the fulfilment of the

primal precept, fosters the union of the married pair, blesses the exercise of the sex faculty, but by its very nature restricts the use of that faculty within reasonable bounds. If this is the function of Matrimony, it is clear, in the light of reason alone, that the use of marriage must never be violently separated from the natural consequences of that use. To practise the prevention of conception is to separate the act from its control; and that opens the doors to excess, which is injurious to the individual; to promiscuity, which is injurious to the family; to the fall of the birth-rate, which is injurious to the race.

That is one way of regarding this question. But there is a more fundamental aspect of it, which points to the same conclusion. It is obvious that there is an order in the universe, and that part works together with part, in mutual subordination or co-ordination, for the perfection of the whole. God's wisdom presided over the work of creation, and secured that this work should be projected according to a divine plan. Every created nature, of mineral, vegetable, beast or man, is endowed with a native tendency which is indicative of God's will regarding that nature's contribution to the perfection of the general scheme. In the lower orders of creation, such tendencies are "necessary": the river, the flower, the bird, unconsciously, but inevitably, follow their native tendency, obey the natural law. They have no choice; the law is imposed on them.

But man is asked for a nobler service, a free and conscious service. To him the law is *proposed* for his willing acceptance. He can refuse to obey, and this he does by abusing the tendencies of his nature, his natural appetites. Of these, one of the most important is that of sex. To gratify that appetite, and at the same time artificially to thwart the prime object of the appetite, is to break the natural law in a serious matter, to sin seriously. Here is the root of the evil found in all the practices of neo-malthusianism. This is why the Church teaches that the artificial control of conception is a grave sin. To say that a gynecological operation, or indeed any surgical operation, is equally a breach of the natural law, is either an ignorant misapplication of the terms and fundamental principles of law, or a disingenuous attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the public and confuse the issue. It has been repeatedly pointed out and explained that there is no parity between the two cases, and that in the second case there need be no breach of any law.

It is frequently suggested that this teaching of the Church means that a Catholic married woman will have to bear a child every year, no matter what the condition of her health or the state of the family finances. That is obvious nonsense. Everybody knows that annual pregnancy is not the rule among those who never dream of using artificial preventatives. Nor would such haphazard childbearing, unrestrained by any consideration beyond mere passion, represent the Catholic ideal. The Church, while teaching her children to reject the worldly and materialistic prudence of the neo-malthusian, while welcoming every child as a new member of the mystical body of Christ, with a capacity to increase God's accidental glory, at the same time teaches that there is a supernatural prudence, a cardinal virtue, which will enable those who possess it to come to a right decision in this matter, as in every other question of moral conduct. This virtue of prudence will enable them to see that it is better to trust the providence of God, than the wisdom of men; that it is better to suffer than to break God's law; but also it will teach them that they should practise self-restraint when considerations of health or the absolute needs of the existing

family require it; it will guide them in the extremely delicate decisions between the demands of justice or charity on either side, inclining a husband to forego his right in deference to the comfort or health of his wife, a wife to take thought for the danger of sin when she is under no immediate obligation.

This is not the place to discuss the details of moral theology in this vital matter, but if anybody imagines that the Church in her teaching is careless of the dignity and claims of the woman in the bilateral contract of matrimony, he has but to consult any textbook to be disabused of such an idea. The purity and strictness of the Church's teaching in regard to the Sacrament of Matrimony has been the most powerful factor in the raising of woman's status in the Christian era; the modern decline from that high standard will pave the way to her degradation.

Equal Franchise.

As we go to press we are awaiting the Prime Minister's statement concerning Equal Franchise. We have again written to him expressing our confidence in his pledge that men and women shall vote on equal terms at the next general election; and we expect that he will fulfill his pledge. Nevertheless we must not slacken our efforts, as we know there are many die-hards in the Government who will do their utmost to obstruct. When the House meets after Easter we hope that many of our members will join in "lobbying" their M.P.s, and support our open-air meetings at Hampstead, to be held on alternate Sundays, the first being on April 24th.

Miss Sheila Hynes represented the Alliance upon the deputation received by Mr. Balfour, M.P., as a result of the Equal Franchise meeting held at Hampstead under the auspices of the Women's Freedom League.

Jumble Sale.

Our thanks are due to Miss Barry, Miss Barclay-Carter and Miss Donovan for undertaking a very successful jumble sale on a barrow at Somerstown Market last Saturday morning. A profit of £2 4s. 9d. was realized which will go towards the deficit on the Catholic Citizen. It is to be hoped that these sales will become a regular event.

Notes and Comments.

What is Equality?

We have received from the Executive Committee of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, a statement regarding the motives which led to the resignation of eleven members of the Committee; we have also received a statement from the members who resigned. If it were possible we should have been glad to publish both statements, but limited space forbids. As we gather, the resigning members consider that certain questions, such as Family Endowment, Birth Control, and League of Nations (apart from the equality clause), tend to divert the energies of the N.U.S.E.C. from the question of Equality. The Executive, on the other hand, declare that the two former questions are bound up with equal status. For ourselves, while ready to publish articles on Family Endowment, either for or against, we have always considered the question too controversial to be put on our programme, and we have never disguised our regret that the N.U.S.E.C. should have taken up the question of Artificial Birth Control. One fact, however, emerges quite clearly from this painful business, and that is that there has never been any doubt on the question of political equality, here both sides stand quite firmly to the demand for the vote on the same terms as men—the slogan of suffragists at all times. As to industrial equality, while both sides demand that the regulation of conditions of work should be based on the nature of the work and not on the sex of the worker; the resigning members consider that certain amendments passed are contrary to the declaration. We are aware that this brief note does not embrace the whole question, but we believe that it is not unfair to either side.

The League of Nations Committee of Experts on the International Traffic in Women and Children, has published its report, and we learn with regret that so far the Council of the League has decided to publish the first part only; the second part to be held over till the various countries concerned have seen it. We trust that this second part will be published in full. This

is a question in which publicity is the first step towards remedying the evil. We hope to deal with the Report in our next issue.

* * * *

The Married Women's (Employment Bill) which we owe to the N.U.S.E.C., comes up for a second reading on April 29. It was introduced by Sir Robert Newman, a staunch friend of feminists. The Bill provides that a woman shall not be refused employment or dismissed from employment on the ground that she is, or is about to be, married. The Bill finds supporters among all parties. We sincerely hope that this Bill for the protection of married women workers will reach the Statute Book.

* * * *

Our member, Miss Dorman, writes from South Africa that great indignation is felt among women at the treatment of the Suffrage Bill, which was given short shrift in the House. When suffragists ask for votes for European women first, they are told they are creating a colour bar; when they ask for the enfranchisement of all women, it is refused because it would include coloured women. Anything to postpone justice to women. Yet our correspondent informs us that the demand is steadily increasing, and among Dutch women also.

* * * *

We note with regret that a Bill is before the Irish Free State Parliament to exclude women from Jury service. We consider this a direct attack on equal citizenship, which, if successful, will certainly lead to further curtailment of women's rights. Mrs. Skeffington, writing in the *Vote*, states that women have always been discouraged from serving as Jurors, and that since the proposed exclusion of women from Juries a section of the Press has begun to clamour for the raising of the voting age of women from 21 to 25. A new Society, the Irish Women's Equality League, has sprung up to meet the situation. We wish it every success.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE,

AND

Editorial Office of "Catholic Citizen":

55 BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W.1. Tel. Museum 4181

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society.

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St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance.

15th ANNUAL MEETING.

The Annual Meeting was held at St. Patrick's Club, Soho, on March 19, at 3 p.m. In the unavoidable absence of the Chairman, Councillor Mrs. Crawford, the chair was taken by Miss Marguerite Fedden. The Annual Report was read by Miss Butler-Bowdon. In calling upon Miss Christopher St. John to move the adoption of the Report, Miss Fedden reminded her audience that Miss St. John was one of our early members, and the donor of our beautiful banner of St. Joan. Miss St. John qualified the Report as a marvellous record of work for a Society comparatively small in numbers. The Society had always stood, as all suffragists do, in the first place for equal franchise, but she hoped that when that was won, the Society would continue. It was not always realised what good work Catholic suffragists had done for the Church; the very existence of so progressive a society of women gave the lie to the belief that Catholics were reactionary. Miss St. John, who was going on to the Queen's Hall Symphony Concert in her capacity as musical critic, took occasion to speak of Sir Henry Wood as being among the few who really did give equal opportunities to men and women.

Miss Barclay Carter, in seconding the adoption of the Report, said that to the younger women it seemed incredible to think of the struggle women had had to get the vote, and to enter the professions, and universities, but the campaign for Equal Franchise was stirring up mud, and many old prejudices were coming to the surface. We were not yet out of the wood. Feminists who demanded Equal Franchise, did so because they believed in democracy.

The adoption of the Financial Statement was moved by Mrs. Smiley, at one time Hon. Secretary of the Liverpool and District Branch. Mrs. Smiley called attention to the large amount raised by Sales: she thought members should

see that the Alliance had sufficient income, without this means of raising money. She suggested that every member should keep a collecting jar, which would add considerably to the funds. It was extraordinary the amount of work done on so small an income.

Mrs. Laughton Mathews, in seconding the adoption of the Financial Statement, said that every member should study it: it was actually the history of the Alliance, and told a very gallant tale of courage and devotion. Mrs. Mathews made a special appeal for subscribers to the *Catholic Citizen*, to make it self-supporting. The paper was a great asset to the Alliance, and extraordinarily cheap. Members who, like herself, had lived abroad, knew what a pleasure it was to get the paper and to read all that was going on. She found that people who would not join a feminist society, were yet glad to read the *Catholic Citizen*.

Miss Butler-Bowdon made an appeal for funds to carry on the campaign for Equal Franchise: the fight for freedom must go on; there was many a wreck within sight of port—victory depended upon women themselves. There was a generous response to her appeal. One of our oldest and staunchest members, Miss Meredith, most kindly promised to leave us £100 in her will. She has, however, recently made over the £100 to us now instead. This sum we have invested, as there are certain conditions attaching to the gift, and it will be a very useful reserve fund for the Alliance. We are most grateful to Miss Meredith for this great kindness, and hope her example may make a precedent for others to follow. We shall be delighted to receive any such sums, large or small. Miss Fedden, in her address, called upon every member to join in the campaign; she urged them to chalk pavements, to speak at street corners, to sell the paper, or to help in the Office. St. Joan's S.P.A. must be in the vanguard.

RESTRICTIVE LEGISLATION.

At the close of the Business Meeting, after an interval for tea, a public meeting was held on the question of restrictive legislation for women in industry, and its ill-effects on the status of the woman worker. Miss Kathleen FitzGerald, who took the chair, said that the Alliance had always stood for equality in industry, as well as in politics. Protective Legislation applicable to women only, usually meant keeping the nice soft jobs for men. Every citizen had the right to work. Mrs. Abbott moved a resolution against restrictions on women's work (see page 33), and put the case against special restriction with eloquence based on knowledge. She spoke of the new Society, "The Open Door Council," recently formed to combat the evil of legislation to restrict women's work. The Council stood not only for the freedom of the industrial worker to choose her own work, but for business and professional workers. Once the mania for restriction got a hold on the world, no woman worker was safe. This mania, instead of dying out with the enfranchisement of women, had taken on a new lease of life through the International Labour Office, which constituted a real danger. Mrs. Abbott spoke of the recent Factory Bill—and she supposed the new Bill promised in November would follow the same lines—in which a whole section coupled women with children and young persons, and laid down special rules regarding them. Miss Douglas Irvine, in seconding, reminded her audience that our Patron, St. Joan, adopted a particularly masculine profession, and refused any special protection. The resolution was carried nem. con., one member of the audience refraining from voting.

COMMITTEE CHANGES.

We received with great regret the resignation of Miss Moclair, who will be absent from London for some time. Miss Havers proposed and Miss de Alberti seconded, the nomination of Miss Barclay-Carter, Lic.-ès-l. As there was no other nomination, Miss Barclay-Carter was elected. By ballot of the Committee, Miss Douglas Irvine, M.A., was elected Chairman for the coming year.

Resolutions passed 15th Annual Meeting,

March 19th, 1927.

St. Patrick's Club Room, Soho Square, W.1.

1.—EQUAL POLITICAL RIGHTS.

(a) *Equal Franchise*.—St. Joan's S.P.A. demands an immediate Government measure giving votes to women at 21 and on the same terms as men.

(b) *Women in the House of Lords*.—St. Joan's S.P.A. calls upon the Government to further legislation to enable peeresses in their own right to sit and vote in the House of Lords.

2.—EQUAL MORAL STANDARD.

(a) *Solicitation Laws*.—In view of the fact that the Government has promised to appoint a committee of enquiry into the laws dealing with street solicitation, St. Joan's S.P.A. urges that the committee shall sit in public and its evidence be published. It re-affirms its conviction that sections specially directed against "common prostitutes" should be repealed and an equal law be substituted applicable to all persons who annoy or molest others in the streets or public places.

(b) *State Regulation of Vice*.—St. Joan's S.P.A. calls upon the Government to do all in its power to hasten the abolition of all brothels known to the authorities within the jurisdiction of the British Empire.

(c) St. Joan's S.P.A. urges the Government to press for the publication of both sections of the full report of the League of Nations Committee of Investigation into the White Slave Traffic which was presented to the Council of the League last week.

3.—EQUAL PAY AND OPPORTUNITIES.

(a) St. Joan's S.P.A. calls upon the Government and Local Authorities to establish among their employees a system of equal pay and opportunities for men and women, thus setting an example to other employers throughout the country.

(b) *Employment of Married Women*.—Believing that women should have the right to decide for themselves whether or not they should engage in paid employment after marriage, St. Joan's S.P.A. calls upon the Government to adopt the Married Women's (Employment) Bill, 1927, "to prevent the refusal to employ women in the public service by reason only of their being married."

(c) *'Protective' Legislation*.—St. Joan's S.P.A., while believing that protection should be afforded to industrial workers, declares that to impose restrictions on women only, is to treat them permanently as minors, and to lower their status as workers.

It believes that the only policy which safeguards their individual liberty and responsibility is that of basing all labour regulations and restrictions upon the nature of the work and not upon the sex of the worker, and calls upon the Government to apply this principle to the promised new Factories Bill."

4.—NATIONALITY OF MARRIED WOMEN.

St. Joan's S.P.A. records with deep regret that the Imperial Conference did not recommend legislation to give effect to the Resolution adopted by the House of Commons on February 18, 1925: "that in the opinion of the House, a British woman shall not lose, or be deemed to lose her nationality, by the mere act of marriage with an alien, and that it should be open to her to make a declaration

of alienage." It urges the Mother Country to take the lead in passing legislation to give effect to this Resolution.

5.—AGE OF MARRIAGE.

St. Joan's S.P.A. deplors the fact that 12 is still the legal age of marriage for girls, and urges immediate legislation to remedy this evil.

6.—WOMEN POLICE.

St. Joan's S.P.A. calls upon the Government to further legislation making it compulsory on Watch Committee and Standing Joint Committee to appoint a sufficient number of women police.

7.—BIRTH CONTROL.

St. Joan's S.P.A. expresses its satisfaction with the continued policy of the Minister of Health in not allowing information on artificial Birth Control to be given at Infant Welfare Centres which are maintained out of public funds to which people of all opinions are required to contribute.

Mgr. Walshe writes:

February 3, 1927.

Dear Miss Barry,

I hasten to send to you and to the members of your Committee a word of warmest thanks for your congratulations and good wishes. I value the blessing and approval of the Holy See very dearly for their intrinsic worth, and I value them also because of the gratification given to my friends, amongst whom I am proud to number you and your friends. We cannot help smiling now at the attitude of certain critics in days gone by. They regarded us with suspicion as being infected with the revolutionary spirit, but the terrible war brought to light many truths—notably, the ineptitude of politicians. Our critics failed to see that our aim was and is to introduce into the conduct of public affairs an element, the influence of which makes for "Glory to God and peace to men of Goodwill."

The letter goes on to say that though the personnel of the Committee has changed, I know that the spirit of courage and of hope has not changed, and I am absolutely with you in your efforts to secure an equal franchise law, whereby women will be better enabled to help in the safeguarding of sacred interests.

Vida Femenina (Barcelona), the organ of the Spanish Institute of Working Women, reports a lecture on cerebral poisons recently given to the School for Nurses of Santa Madrona by a certain Dr. Saval. "In England," the lecturer is stated to have said, "they think nothing of drinking ether. They give a little glass of it to a visitor, out of civility, or to someone who has done them a service by way of a tip, and, what is worse, some of them give it to children instead of sweets. . . . There are race-courses in England where empty ether boxes lie on the ground as plentifully as match-boxes do here." We hope our contemporary will note that this statement is fantastic to the point of the ludicrous. Someone has been making fun of Dr. Saval.

"The Catholic Citizen."

Our energetic Finance Sub-Committee, bent on filling the War chest of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance are determined that the gallant little paper, the mainstay of all our work, shall not be left outside their purview and they are going to give those people who sing its praises and deplore any suggestion of it "going under," the opportunity of backing up compliments and protestations by concrete assistance.

Therefore, an American Tea has been arranged for April 30th, 3 to 6 p.m., when everyone is asked to come and bring something in the way of eatables or household requisites and to buy and take away something else in the way of eatables or household requisites. Entrance is free to members and their friends, and tea is 1/- per person. Character Delineation by Miss Wall.

The function is to be held in the 1920 Club in Whitehall Court just behind the War Office.

It is to be hoped that people will roll up by scores.

The N.C.W.C. *Bulletin* reports that recent investigations have revealed the fact that in Pennsylvania, during the year 1924, 521 girls were married while still under sixteen years of age, the legal age for marriage in that State being fourteen for boys and twelve for girls. Social agencies are now agitating for a measure fixing the marriage age for both sexes at sixteen at least.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

Hon. Secretary: Miss N. S. Parnell, B.A., 45 Falkner Street, Liverpool.

The Branch has met twice since its Annual Meeting in January. On the first occasion Mrs. Gordon was our hostess, and the Hon. Secretary stepped into the breach at the last moment and gave an address on "Women at Work in the League of Nations," after which resolutions were passed to be sent to the Prime Minister and Sir Eric Drummond. The next meeting took place on March 21, and was a small money-raising effort, for which 1s. was charged. Once again the Committee generously provided the refreshments and Miss Crawford arranged the social items. During the course of the evening the Hon. Secretary gave an account of the deputation to the Prime Minister on Equal Franchise, and each member promised to distribute leaflets among their friends and to go on deputations to M.P.'s, if summoned by the Secretary. The subject of women on hospital boards was also discussed, and Mrs. Gordon gave first hand information as to the conditions of nurses in Poor Law hospitals, which are better than those of other nurses, largely due to the presence of Women Guardians. We were once again very much indebted to Mrs. Murphy for the use of her rooms for the meeting. On April 7, the Hon. Secretary is to speak at a big Equal Franchise Meeting in Bradford, organised by several organisations of women.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS.

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Anon.	2	0	
Anon.	2	6	
Bain, Miss	4	5	0
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Bivort, Madame de	5	7	
Bodley, Miss	3	0	
Butler-Bowdon, Miss E.	15	6	2
Brady, Mrs.	2	6	
Brady, Miss	5	0	
Brandt, Miss	11	6	
Bumpsteed, Miss	2	6	
Carter, Miss Barclay	2	0	
Challoner, Miss	4	6	
Cockshutt, Miss	2	6	
Connolly, Miss L.	1	0	0
Demery, Miss	10	0	
Dobbins, Mrs.	2	6	
Donovan, Miss B.	1	15	0
Donovan, Miss K.	1	10	0
Fedden, Miss	1	0	0
Filmer, Rev. J. H.	7	6	
FitzGerald, Miss E.	1	5	0
FitzGerald, Miss K.	2	0	
Gafiney, Mrs.	2	6	
Hart, Miss	5	0	
Havers, Miss	5	0	
Havers, per Miss	1	5	0
Huggett, Mrs.	3	0	
Hynes, Miss	2	6	
Jeffery, Miss	1	0	0

Kilgallin, Miss	2	6	
Laughton, Lady	1	1	0
Liveing, Mrs.	5	0	
McCormick, Miss	3	0	
Malleson, Miss	1	3	
Mathews, Mrs. Laughton	1	0	0
Meredith, Miss	100	0	0
Musson, Miss A. J.	3	0	0
O'Connor, Miss E.	1	6	
O'Gorman, Miss	2	0	
Scott-Hill, Mrs.	7	6	
Sheehan, Mrs.	1	6	
Smiley, Mrs.	5	0	
Souza, de Mde.	7	6	
Thunder, Miss	2	6	
Toner, Mrs.	6	6	
Tuker, Miss M. A. R.	1	3	
Wain, Mrs.	2	6	
Wall, Miss	10	0	
Welch, Miss J. R. V.	10	0	
Whitehead, Miss	2	0	
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£141 19 3

TREASURER'S NOTE.

Elsewhere we refer to Miss Meredith's most generous gift, for which we offer her our heartiest thanks. Our warm thanks are also due to the above subscribers, including those who gave or promised donations at the Annual Meeting. This month I am appealing specially for three more "collectors" who will be responsible for bringing in 25s. quarterly towards the office rent. We have now eight collectors, and another three would cover our annual requirements for rent, thus leaving all other subscriptions to go towards the general working of the Alliance and our Equal Franchise Campaign.

G. JEFFERY.

We learn with great regret that the French Senatorial Commission has pronounced against votes for women. We know that our French colleagues will continue their fight and may yet convert the Senate. We do not believe that France can lag behind the civilised nations much longer.

We much regret that a letter from Miss A. M. F. Cole has been crowded out of this issue, along with other important items. Miss Cole asks for the support of our readers for the Bill introduced by Mr. Ammon, to amend the law with respect to the exportation of Horses.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE.

NON-PARTY.

Office—55, Berners St., Oxford St., London. W.
Patron: Saint Joan of Arc. Colours: Blue, White & Gold
Organ—"The Catholic Citizen," 2d. monthly.

OBJECT.

To band together Catholics of both sexes, in order to secure the political, social and economic equality between men and women, and to further the work and usefulness of Catholic women as citizens.

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LONDON UNIT.

TUESDAY, MAY 10th, at 8 p.m.,

PUBLIC MEETING

ON

"EQUAL FRANCHISE,"

LOWER TOWN HALL, BATTERSEA.

Speakers include—Miss A. Dawson (N.U.W.T.), and Miss Barclay Carter, Lic-ès-L. (St. Joan's S.P.A.)

MRS. TIDSWELL (Vice-President N.U.W.T.),
in the chair.